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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DOS review(s) completed.

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SUMMARY

GENERAL

1. Soviet service attaches in Mexico reportedly expect war in about six months (page 3).
2. Owner professedly seeking pretext to divert China-bound Finnish tanker (page 3).

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GENERAL

1. Soviet service attaches in Mexico reportedly expect war in about six months:

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[redacted] the Soviet Military and Naval Attaches stated in late January that they believed war might begin in about six months. They hoped to leave Mexico soon in order to avoid internment.

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[redacted] the Military Attache and his assistant were scheduled to leave Mexico on 5 February. No reservation was made for the Military Attache's wife.

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Comment: There is no indication of a general exodus of Soviet diplomatic personnel from posts outside the Orbit.

Soviet representatives in the field are probably not informed either on the Kremlin's estimate of the situation or on war intentions. The views expressed by these attaches are presumed to be personal; they are, however, consonant with Communist propaganda on alleged American plans to enlarge hostilities in the Far East.

2. Owner professedly seeking pretext to divert China-bound Finnish tanker:

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The owner of the tanker Wiima, which is now en route to Communist China loaded with kerosene, told the American Legation in Helsinki on 6 February that he would be glad of a "legitimate pretext" to cancel the charter and divert the vessel from its destination. He said that an American declaration of a blockade of the China coast would be grounds for breaking the contract.

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Comment: The owner did not indicate whether a Chinese Nationalist blockade would be a "legitimate pretext."

A Nationalist Navy spokesman stated on 6 February that the navy had been alerted to "watch for" the Wiima, which should be in Formosan waters about 20 February if not diverted. The Wiima could avoid the Nationalists by putting in at Canton or by sailing far east of Formosa.

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